

PING-PONG?

Let me tell you
Says AL MALE

TABLE TENNIS IS A WHIZZ

YOU'RE TOO OLD AT 25!

YOU haven't seen table tennis for a long time, huh? Used to play it as a kid, of course... in the days when they called it "ping pong".... well, if that's the case, young man, you're in for a surprise this evening.

Oh, no... I won't spoil your memories, just hang on to them as we make our way to the hall... in fact, maybe I can refresh them for you.

Only this morning I came across a newspaper cutting dated April 4th, 1930, which said: "Mr. James Gibb, inventor of ping-pong, died yesterday at St. Lawrence, Ventnor, Isle of Wight, at the age of 76. Mr. Gibb had to do a great deal of experimenting before he created ping-pong as the public knows it. He began one evening playing with champagne corks and cigar-box lids as bats. Next he tried indiarubber balls covered with white paper. These were not a success, so he had celluloid balls specially made. It took him some time to find someone sufficiently interested to launch the game. Eventually he persuaded some sports outfitters to take it up, and within a few weeks ping-pong became the rage."

Became the rage, huh? ... well, well.

Do you remember those hollow skin (or was it parchment paper?) bats which really did "pong" whenever you hit the ball, and how they warped until they became almost scoop-shaped? Rather a homely sort of sound, wasn't it? Ping... pong... ping pong, as you made your great rallies... and just as things looked like going on for ever there was a loud "pop," and your last celluloid ball had burst in the fire.

Yes... that was fun, wasn't it? And a good idea to keep the family interest centred in the home, too.

Trouble was, of course, that whilst the "tournament" was in progress everything had to be cleared out of the room, as there was no spare "alley," and the only guy who had a real front seat was the laddie who danced in front of the open fireplace, like an international goalie, trying to prevent the valuable ball from committing suicide... he had a front seat all right... but his real seat... boy, oh boy!... he fairly wished he could swing THAT round to the front... coal was cheap those days.

Well... that's how I made the acquaintance of the game, anyway... can't say how you did, old chap... perhaps you were one of the lucky people who could devote a special room to the ping-pong table.

You weren't? Well then, it looks as though we start from scratch; but if you haven't seen the game since those days, I'm afraid I have the advantage of you.

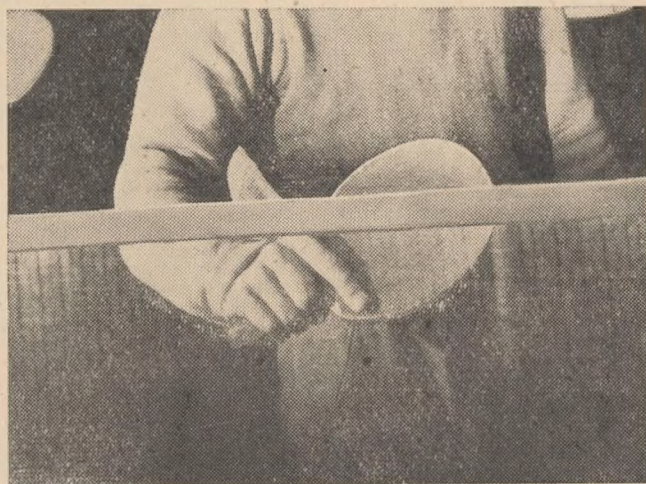
Going in a funny direction, are we?... Where do you think we're headin' for?... a local pub?

Sorry, old chap... we are making our way to the Royal Albert Hall... yes, the Royal Albert Hall... table tennis has reached such gigantic dimensions that only such a large place can accommodate it.

Do you realise that there are no less than sixteen nations competing in these World Table Tennis Championships... that fifty Brit-

ish interpreters and one hundred and seventy British referees are required to help see it through?

In the English Table Tennis Association alone there are 201 leagues, 3,800 clubs, and 60,000 registered players... I wonder if our friend, the late Mr. Gibb, ever anticipated such a boom in his little game of ping-pong?... Why... even in 1935 five thousand people were making their living out of table tennis in Britain... the sport created sales for 11,000 tables, 100,000 bats, and no less than 1,500,000 balls... amazing, isn't it?



Well, here we are... afraid those few statistics have rather spoiled my surprise for you, old chap, but I really couldn't let you take the shock.

Grand sight, isn't it? Let's go higher up; a bird's-eye view of this set-up is really a sight... the people who lay this affair out really have an eye for the spectacular.

Bit of a climb, but well worth it... just look down into the centre of the hall... don't those four tables look marvellous bathed in brilliant light?... Chairs there for the judges... they watch the net, they glue their eyes on the base-lines, they never let a single shot go unnoticed, and, of course, the referee sits at the table there... eyes like a hawk... this is a game of split-second decisions, you know.

Lots of room round each table? They need it, old chap... some of those experts stand as far back as fifteen feet from the table when doing their long-range stuff.

Oh, no, those aren't all the tables... there are seven more round the balcony, all in use from early morning... plenty of eliminating bouts to get through, you know.

Colourful? I'll say it is. Did you ever see so many coloured shirts as worn by those fellows? Why, they even make the girls' dresses (coloured shirt and slacks) look drab by comparison.

Some of the tables have quite a big crowd... these players have reputations, you know, and they are all fighting hard to get into the finals... Seems a pity sometimes to see two or four players going all out and hardly a solitary spectator to watch

the game, but the trouble is that with so many tables in action you simply cannot be at more than one at a time, so you have to sort of make up your mind whom you want to watch, and even then the chances are that you will stop at another table on the way to your original choice.

Of course, I've done it... intended going straight to a certain table and never reached it because I found a less-boasted game too fascinating to leave.

On your way round you'll find someone whose style appeals to you... or maybe

upper hand... sort of "Stick it, youngster, and good luck to you" feeling... YOU know what I mean, don't you?

Right... we'll make our way to the lower regions... looks as though a crowd is gathering round one of those tables.

Phew... quite a distance, wasn't it?... Take one of those seats there... they are vanishing too quickly for my liking.

What's that the announcer is saying?

Gosh... he can't get his tongue round the name... some of these foreign fellows have some real tongue-twisters... just listen... he's calling for a Lithuanian player, I think.

"Will Mr. Dzindzilius... will Mr. Dzindzilius... will Mr. D for dog, Z for zebra, I for ink, N for nobody, D for donkey, Z for zebra, I for ink, L for London, I for ink, A for apple, U for uncle, S for sugar, K for Katie, A for apple and S for sugar, please report at the centre table immediately."

He's quite welcome to that job as far as I am concerned... what say you?

Ah... looks as though we are going to be lucky enough to see Victor Barna, the Hungarian, who is world champion... actually, you'll have to keep your eyes skinned or you will only see Victor and not the ball.

Barna can perform miracles with that bat of his. He can swerve a ball in the air, make it shoot as soon as it touches the table, make it spin to the left or right, and actually make it jump back across the net.

But his most spectacular shot is his famous back-hand flick which shoots the ball at express speed right down the white line along the side of the "court." It is literally almost impossible to see that shot. Barna does it all with his wrists, which he has developed to an amazing degree by rowing on the Danube. He can return a ball accurately when it has almost touched the floor.

So now you know what to look out for.

Hell!... I should hate

face Barna... don't know how this kid has the pluck to do it. Lummy, the champion is going back four yards from the table to facilitate his lightning service.

Afraid this won't take long, unless the Lithuanian has a secret weapon tucked under the sleeve of his sleeveless vest. There they go.

Did you ever see such shots? Did you ever see such returns? In fact... did you ever see table tennis until now?

Barna scooped that one almost from the floor and placed it out of play in the bargain. "Zin" is playing like a wizard... just watch the shots he's risking... seems that he's no fool after all... even making a rally of it... Oh, no, it won't last long... rules limit rallies to twenty minutes, but nobody could go that distance with Barna... he's a lone traveller.

Zin seems to be getting the hang of Barna's back-hand; at any rate, he's managing to return it—ping, pong, ping, pong, ping, pong, ping, pong... that's done it... Barna led him to believe he'd got the upper hand of that back-hand, and just as the kid was getting confident the Hungarian slipped in a super-fast one right at the opposite side of the table. Still, that first set was Barna 21, Zin 15... which would be just fifteen more than I personally could hope to get.

Off again... Barna seems to be letting himself go now. He's got the measure of the youngster and wants a "kill" as soon as possible.

Kid isn't so sure, though... still thinks he might have a change of luck and even beat the champ. to a set, at any rate... Talk about pluck... this boy won't be scared, world champ, or no world champ.

Boy, oh boy, did you ever see such a variety of shots?

Drop shots, spinning shots, half-volleys, all too fast to record. (Two players have been known to play somewhere round 1,600 strokes and each run nearly two miles during a twenty-minute rally.) Really spellbinding, isn't it?

Barna has no mercy... After all, if this youngster registers a win over a champion, said champion's reputation suffers a set-back, doesn't it? He's running the boy off his feet... found his weak spot and attacking it like fury... Poor little devil, he knows he's on the run, but still hopes for an accident which might give him a break.

Hard luck, youngster... you're making a grand show, but you must remember that you are up against a champion... a world's champion at that... You did well to collect 14 points, and don't forget you are sure to have learned something from so great an opponent... there's nothing like a game with the "master" for teaching a fellow a thing or two... a "master" always plays his strokes perfectly... you couldn't have a better example.

Gosh... the kid is wet through with perspiration... had a gruelling time... shame that he has to go through another set.

Here they come for the third bout. Listen to the applause the youngster is getting... even Barna gave him a pat on the back as he passed... nice gesture that... I bet the boy will remember it for the rest of his life... to be complimented by a world's champion is something which doesn't happen every day.

Barna is opening with his lightning service; wants to get it over and save the Lithuanian a Marathon. Well, he's taken five points on the run... looks like a walk-over.

Not so easy, old chap... the boy knows he can't win, so he's in a position to risk anything... he's trying a new service... Well, there's nothing like trying it on a world-beater... if it beats HIM it is some service.

Ye gods!... Barna is confused... at least momentarily... Oh, he has got the mastery of it... bang it goes back, unreturnable... That was the kid's last card, and he'll probably fold up now.

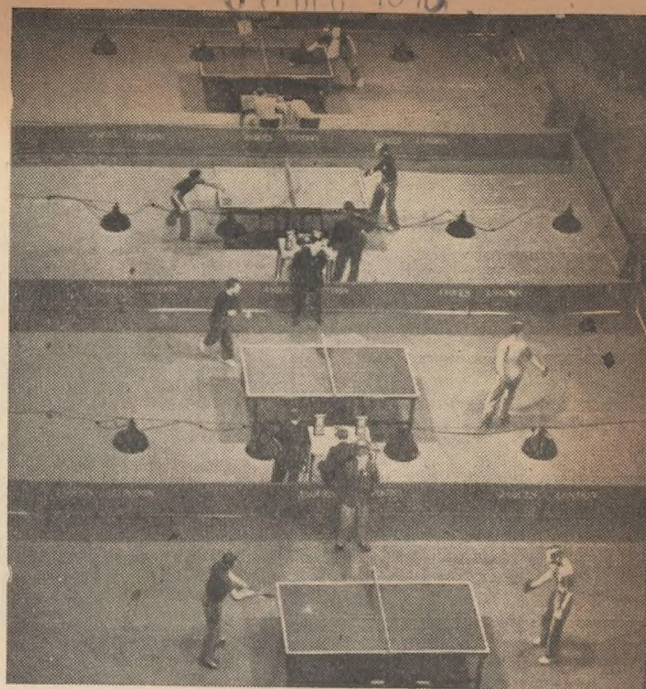
Yes... he's sagging, but you can't blame him; he has put up a grand fight... pretty heart-breaking to hit up against a champion in your first game, isn't it?... Well done, youngster! You'll go places. Maybe in a year's time you'll be hitting the high spots.

Enjoy it? ... Fine... Feeling sorry for the game 'un, eh?

It WAS hard luck, but don't forget the boy is having a fine holiday... perhaps he would never have left Lithuania had he not entered for this championship tournament... grand experience and globe-trotting opportunities for all, now that the game has become so internationally popular.

If what I overheard is true, your idol will be flashing those white teeth of his in the sunshine of Egypt next week... he's entered for the championship meeting at Cairo.

Rather a far cry from the drawing-room game of ping-pong of forty or fifty years ago, isn't it?



"Go very, very carefully with Mr. C"

QUIZ for today

1. Suffolk Punch is a drink, boxing term, horse, engraver's tool, clown?
2. Who wrote (a) A Legend of Montrose, (b) Legends and Lyrics?
3. Which of the following is an intruder, and why?—Pea, Parsnip, Spinach, Cauliflower, Endive, Lettuce.
4. What do the letters "E. & O. E." on an invoice stand for?
5. Who is Mrs. Sonnie Hale?
6. In lacrosse, how many players are there on each side?
7. Which of the following are mis-spelt?—Exquisite, Minature, Hazardous, Heronry, Neice, Nephew.
8. What is the A.T.S. equivalent of an Army Corporal?
9. Does the Equator run through any part of India?
10. On what river does Lisbon stand?
11. Is 12.10 p.m. nearer to midday or midnight?
12. Complete the names: (a) — the Terrible, (b) — the Wake.

Answers to Quiz in No. 227

1. Antelope.
2. (a) W. Blake, (b) Dryden.
3. Flodden is in England; others in Scotland.
4. Aire.
5. Fifteen.
6. Charm.
7. Rehearsal, Humorous.
8. Cicely Courtneidge.
9. "Johnny Walker" whisky.
10. Shakespeare ("Henry IV").
11. Harpo, Groucho, Chico, Zeppo.
12. (a) Katherine, (b) William.

"Down here? Where?"
"On a yacht, which I understand he keeps at a place called Wodenbridge."
"Wodenbridge. I know it; it's not twenty miles from here."
"I was saying, it was in your part of the world," old Webb reproved him again. "Now, Mr. Hugh, there are some things better not said in detail, but I have gained the impression that Mr. C. has a questionable character in business matters. What his calling is now I cannot say, but it would appear that from time to time he is in funds, and then again from time to time he is not. And that's no kind of a man to have dealings with. That is all you will want to know, I think."

Webb became more human as he rang off. Take my advice, Hughie," he said, "leave the person in question very much alone. He's a bad egg, a very bad egg."

And that from John Webb was a major damnation.

(To be continued)

"I shall be in London on Monday, and I may have some suggestions to make when I've looked up my diary," he said, and she drove away in an optimistic mood, though she had to admit that but for having heard the terrible story of Janet's early life she had learned nothing to help in her quest.

Marrow rather expected to hear from old John Webb by the morning's post. But no letter came, and he was not sorry. He had plenty of odd jobs to do about the inn, and he spent some time with the new visitor halfway through the morning. Mr. Ferdinand Pollock, of Leicester, as the hotel register proclaimed him, was an enthusiastic amateur photographer with a passion for old buildings and old inns.

Mr. Pollock took many pictures of the "Black Boy," then, at Stephen's suggestion, went off to take views of Wilford Priory.

But Merrow's peaceful morning ended about noon. There was a telephone call for him, and he heard old John Webb's voice at the other end of the wire.

"Concerning that matter, Mr. Hugh," he said, "I thought I'd rather speak than write about it. Go very, very carefully with Mr. C."

"You've traced him then?" Merrow queried.

"I think so. If he's your man I'd leave him alone. He is no longer a practising solicitor. There was some trouble with his firm a few years ago. Logan and C. they were, of Whitmore Chambers. As I understand, there were no proceedings, but Logan decamped and was drowned somewhere on the Riviera. We have a client in Whitmore Chambers who remembers them well; a small firm, with little business, and your Mr. C. had no very creditable reputation."

"Where does he live?" Merrow asked.

Webb said reprovingly, "Don't hurry me. Our client lives at Padstow Park, that new suburb out beyond Harrow, and he tells me that C. and his wife have recently taken a furnished house there. He tells me he sees C. sometimes at the local hotel, but he believes he is away holiday-making at the moment down in your part of the world."

nothing of the old life to remember. Not even her name. I knew her life story; she had no near relatives, and was in touch with none of her old acquaintances. She went with letters of introduction from me to New York and worked there for a year or two. I saw her off, and it was then that we made our pact."

Argent spoke very sadly. "She promised me that if ever she felt herself slipping—going back to the drink again—she would come to me at once. Otherwise we were not to meet. But I followed her career with the utmost interest. You see, Miss Darcy, I owed a great deal to Helen West for letting me experiment with her. She was, if I may so put it, my first success. And because of that, there are very many people to-day, who were once in her deplorable state, who owe much to her, too."

Argent was silent for a second or two, then: "I wanted you to know these things before we go on talking," he added, "so that you may understand that it is not easy for me to answer your question if I could suggest anybody who knew of her past and might be likely to have been blackmailing her about it."

Gwen Darcy nodded thoughtfully. Already she had begun to realise this difficulty.

"There were so many who might have—been capable of it, you mean?" she queried after a moment.

"Very many," Argent said quietly. "She had some utterly disreputable companions—of the underworld. Yet I do not feel so seriously concerned about them. I'll tell you why. It was a long time ago; many of them must have died of death long since."

"We thought, Mr. Merrow



"Volunteers for our new midget submarines, sir!!"

The Lady in Number Four By Richard Keverne PART XI

"I may be able to help you there. I keep notes and a diary. Or I might be able to get in touch with Nurse Marshall."

"Yes, she might help," Gwen said.

"If I can find her. She ran the Shinglemouth home, and when it failed I lost sight of her."

"Oh, she ran it?"
"Yes. She was an excellent nurse for certain cases, but that didn't mean that she was a good business woman. Now, then. The one definite person who stands out in this complex affair is Charlton. Have you any description of him?"

"No. Mr. Merrow may have, or may be getting one. And Milly Claxton could give it to us."

"Patently we must get that description. And now we're going to have lunch." And with that Philip Argent seemed to dismiss the whole matter from his mind.

They did talk a little more about Janet after lunch, but Argent did not encourage the subject, though he laughed when he said, "Poor Doctor Danvers; he would be terribly shocked, I'm afraid, if he knew I hadn't taken his advice."

"He would be," Gwen retorted.

"Danvers knew her medical history," Argent said drily. "I told him when she went to Chelsea. I kept closer tabs on her, as the Americans say, than she suspected. That's why I want to help you."

He saw her into her car and gave her a final admonition not

ARGENT reached for another cigarette and went on: "I first met her in Paris, a year or so after I'd qualified, quite fifteen years ago. She was a student; she can't have been much more than twenty. I had gone to Paris to study, too. From the first alcoholism and narcotics had interested me. But I didn't spend all my time in the hospitals. I dabbled a bit in painting myself, and I got in with one of the wilder painting sets.

"They interested me, and—you're going to find me brutally frank—I found among them cases to study, dopes and drunks; mixing with them, I learned a lot of things I should never have learned in clinics or consulting-rooms. I saw them at it. I won't weary you with technical details, but I assure you that what I saw was painful—but immensely helpful. I'll put it this way: doctors, as a rule, only see patients when the harm is done. I saw and studied it being done."

Gwen was listening intently. "I see," she said. "I can understand."

"I wouldn't have told you if I hadn't been sure of that," he said. "Now Helen, she was clever. I liked her work and I liked her. But she was drink-

WANGLING WORDS—183

- 1.—Place the same two letters, in the same order, both before and after VIAB, to make a word.
- 2.—Rearrange the letters of NO UGLY BRATS, to make a West country town.
- 3.—Altering one letter at a time, and making a new word with each alteration, change: BOWL into JACK, SONG into TIME, MARE into FOAL, WATER into WINGS.
- 4.—How many 4-letter and 5-letter words can you make from FANTASTICAL?

Answers to Wangling Words—No. 182

- 1.—NONINO.
- 2.—WHETSTONE.
- 3.—SALT, SALE, BALE, BILE, WILE, WISE, WISH, FISH.
- TURN, TORN, CORN, COIN, COIL, TOIL, TAIL, MOTH, MOTE, COTE, CORE, FORD, FOLD, COLD, COLT, BOLT, BOAT, COAT, DOGS, COGS, CONS, CONE, BONE.
- 4.—Arch, Char, Carp, Bash, Ship, Arcs, Scar, Shop, Chip, Chap, Chop, Cars, Crop, Crib, Crab, Rich, Rash, Rasp, Ribs, Robs, Bars, Scab, etc.
- Chirp, Chair, Paris, Choir, Roach, Parch, Sharp, Crash, Crops, Chars, Carib, Porch, etc.

JANE



CROSSWORD CORNER

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10								
12				13		14		
		15		16		17		
18	19		20		21			
22		23		24		25	26	
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30	31		32		33			
34			35		36		37	
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40						41		

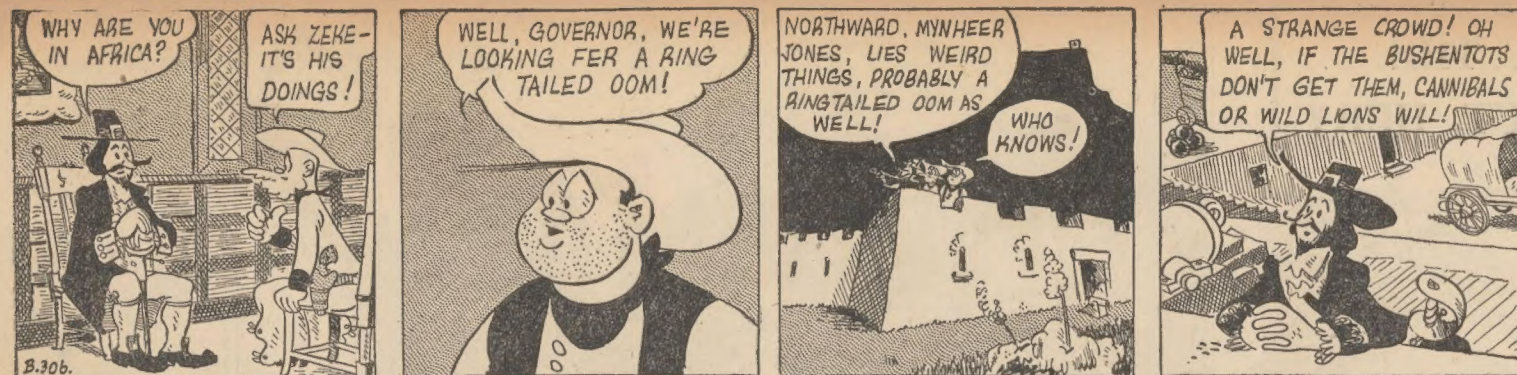
- CLUES ACROSS.
- 1 Rebuked.
 - 5 Goes quickly.
 - 10 Sort of bean.
 - 11 Chopper.
 - 12 Minute thing.
 - 13 Cooking statement.
 - 15 Tidings.
 - 17 Misfortunes.
 - 18 Time before.
 - 20 Hot weather.
 - 22 Concise.
 - 24 Nasty glances.
 - 27 Attar.
 - 29 Seine.
 - 30 Endorsement.
 - 32 Listen to.
 - 34 Fishing eagle.
 - 36 Young animal.
 - 38 Part of shoe.
 - 39 Lovable.
 - 40 Last.
 - 41 Marsh plant.

Solution to Yesterday's Problem.

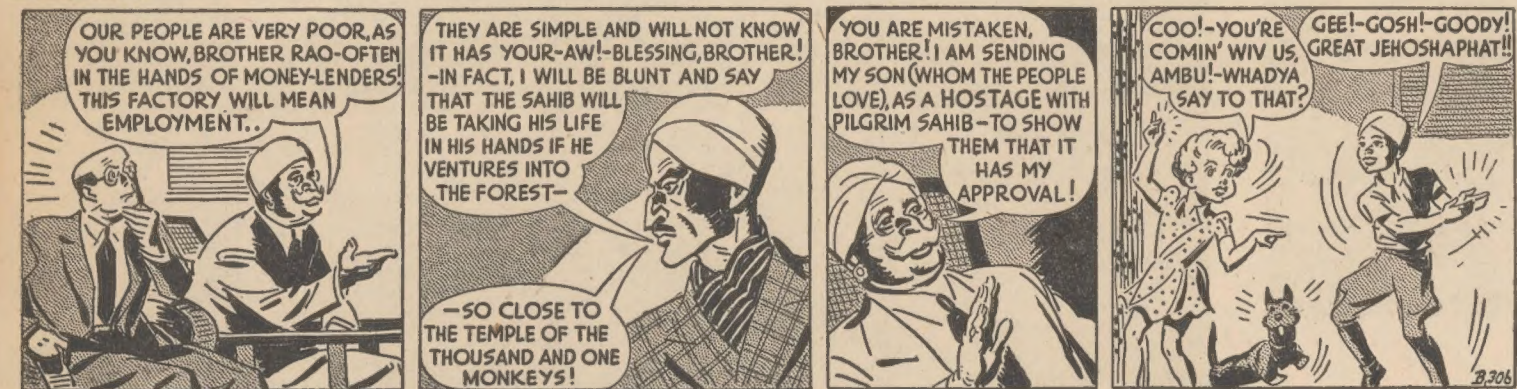
LAP CHOWS M
AROMA PROVE
CROON POLAR
KILT TOTING
V ERASED E
LET EKE SIR
A ASSESS C
SPICES TRIM
COLON PEACE
ADOPT APPLE
R RESIN SET

- CLUES DOWN.
- 1 Cottage.
 - 2 Head covering.
 - 3 Laundry employee.
 - 4 Part of dollar.
 - 5 Common animal.
 - 6 Took food.
 - 7 Appendage.
 - 8 Examine.
 - 9 Observes.
 - 14 Quote in support.
 - 16 Sharpen.
 - 19 Flesh food.
 - 21 Medicinal plant.
 - 23 Mount high.
 - 25 Dress.
 - 26 Specified as.
 - 28 Fragrant herb.
 - 30 Ballot.
 - 31 Hurried.
 - 32 At a distance.
 - 35 Corn spike.
 - 37 Drink.

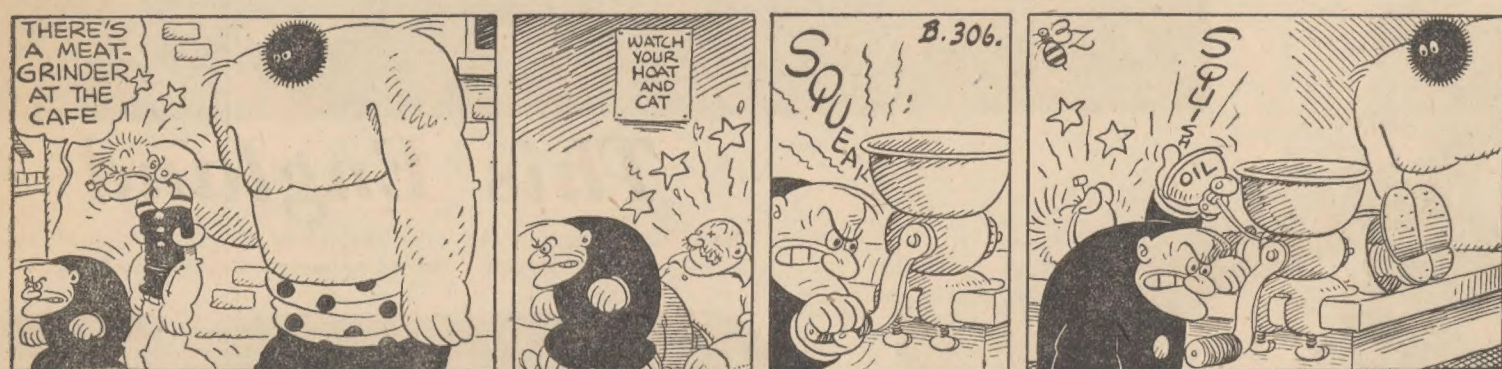
BEELZEBUB JONES



BELINDA



POPEYE



RUGGLES



GARTH



JUST JAKE



Hardly Shipshape—No. 10

ROUND SHIPS

By E. W. Dlood

THERE was an excellent idea behind the Russian "round" ships—the provision of a flat, circular vessel to give a steady gun-platform.

They were stable enough in the shallow waters of the Baltic and the Black Sea, but they were wet ships, and they bumped, owing to their flat bottoms, in any sort of weather.

Nevertheless they had many features of interest, and facts and figures of two of them—the "Admiral Popoff" and the "Livadia"—are striking.

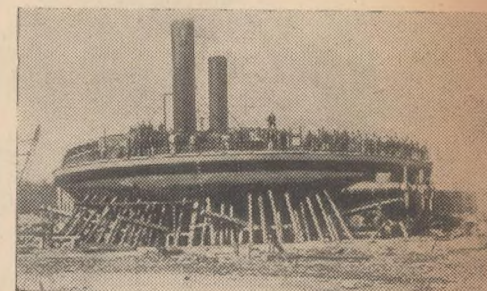
The "Popoff" was actually a circular armour-plated floating battery, built to the design of the Russian Admiral of that name at Nicolaieff in 1875. She displaced 3,553 tons, and had an extreme diameter of 121 feet. She was built of iron, sheathed with wood and coppered. Her double bottom was divided into 24 watertight compartments.

Four two-stage expansion vertical engines each worked an independent screw of 10½ feet in diameter; whilst four more, arranged and worked in pairs, drove the two remaining screws, which were much larger, their blades reaching below keel level.

When in shallow water, these larger screws, which were three-bladed, were fixed with the upper blades vertical, in which position, of course, the screws were above the ship's bottom. There was a single rudder of unusual length.

The central part of the upper deck was occupied by a circular breastwork of 18-inch iron, seven feet high. This sheltered two 12-inch 40-ton guns, mounted on fixed slides, and the guns were trained by turning the ship.

The side armour extended from the upper deck, 1½ feet above waterline to 4½ feet below. The upper deck was protected by horizontal armour 3in. thick. The height of the barbette above load water line was 13½ feet. The "Popoff's" draught was 13 feet.



A similar ship, the "Novgorod," was built in 1873.

The Imperial Russian yacht "Livadia" was built five years later by John Elder and Co., in Glasgow, to Russian Admiralty designs. The lower part of the hull was turbot-shaped, and contained the machinery and stores. The double bottom was 3½ feet deep in the centre and nearly flat. The deck was rounded above.

On top of the power hull there was a superstructure of more usual shape, providing accommodation for officers and crew. The Imperial quarters and those of the suite were on the upper deck, whilst an awning deck contained the spacious state saloons.

Each of the three sets of two-stage expansion engines drove a four-bladed propeller, 16 feet in diameter. The "Livadia" did just 16 knots on her trials.

She had a displacement of 3,900 tons; length of 235 feet; breadth of 153 feet. The depth from the awning deck was 36.6 feet, and her draught was only 6.6 feet.

She was not broken up until 1926.

Hidden here are some animals. The letters are in the right column, but not in the right line. Can you find them?

S L S P U A S T
M Q T G R E E O
E A U Q L R O H
A U I I E H O R
K E E E H R E L
H N D N D A N E
R E N G A O P G

Solution in No. 229.

Good Morning

All communications to be addressed to: "Good Morning," C/o Press Division, Admiralty, London, S.W.1.

SO YOU WON'T
LET THE
CAT OUT, HUH?



This England

The village street at Finchingfield, Essex. Surely the ideal "street" for song-writers to rave about.



MISS ENGLAND

for three consecutive years. Edna Wood is now playing "Sweet and Low" at the Ambassadors' Theatre, London.



Just look at that centre kid's eyes — fair standing out, they are! Wouldn't yours if you saw a youngster knocking back a REAL EGG, with such gusto?



TOP O' THE WORLD

SHIP'S CAT SIGNS OFF

